In Memoriam

Richard G. Brown

On December 6, 1994, Richard G. Brown, a trustee of the friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery, former president (4 years), tour guide, and Civil War buff died after a year-long illness. Dick joined the Friends shortly after its inception and made many contributions to the betterment of Mt. Hope. He established a cooperative working arrangement with the City of Rochester who supplied staff expertise and financial help for various restoration projects. In addition, Dick acted as a catalyst in achieving the 1992 repair of the gazebo, the exterior restoration of the gatehouse, and most recently its interior renovation, even though he was then battling his illness. Besides being a regular Sunday tour guide, he conducted two well-attended Civil War tours.

Dick also acted as a liaison with other community organizations in planning joint activities concerning the cemetery. The trustees will remember his sense of humor which enlivened many meetings. When something needed to be done, he usually volunteered whether it was sweeping the floor, cleaning the storage room, or planning some kind of enterprise.

Several years ago he purchased his own gravesite near the tour route along Indian Trail. Dick was dedicated to preserving the best of Mt. Hope. We will remember him with affection and gratitude and miss him greatly.
MT. HOPE'S INSTITUTIONAL PLOTS

by Jack McKinney

Anyone who has toured Mt. Hope even casually will have noticed that, in addition to the thousands of single graves and family plots, there are many areas which were acquired by organizations for the burial of deceased members and others whose lives were pertinent to their concerns.

Some of these are especially prominent. Most visitors notice, for example, the concentration of "institutional" areas in the northwest corner of the "New Ground." Here one finds the Firemen's Plot with its 50-foot high column at the top of which stands the statue of a firefighter. Westerly across the avenue is the Civil War Plot with its two cannons and Sally James Farnham's bronze sculpture of "The Sergeant and the Bugle Boy." Immediately south of the firemen is one devoted to St. John's Home. And to the east is the DAR/SAR boulder near the Revolutionary War graves of Capt.-Lieut. Boyd, Sgt. Parker, and other victims of 1779's Groveland Ambuscade.

Further south, along Firemen's Avenue, are the Spanish-American War Plot, again with fieldpiece, and World War I with its two tall poles flying the American flag.

But these are only the locations which most people notice. There are many, many others and, while there can never be a complete list, we have so far identified 35 different organizations which among them have acquired over fifty cemetery sites for their own use.

These include religious groups (nine Jewish congregations alone), fraternal societies (Masons, Odd Fellows, Free Sons of Israel), charitable institutions (Rochester Orphan Asylum, Home for the Friendless, Western House of Refuge), and affinity groups (Caledonian Society, Flour City Millers Voluntary Aid Society) along with others less conveniently classified.

The entire gamut of Rochester history is represented here—in organizations both past and contemporary and large and small. There are sites accommodating hundreds and others only one-quarter of a lot in size. Some were acquired as the cemetery opened in 1838, others as recently as the 1980's.

The earliest of Mt. Hope's institutional owners was probably the Rochester Orphan Asylum. Although any purchase record that may have existed has been lost, the central monument at the site in Section O has the year 1837 inscribed on its east face.

The next oldest plot undoubtedly was the one acquired by or for the Rochester Fire Department, at its original site in Section F, sometime before 1843. This was followed in 1848 by three purchases, two of which—by the Sons of Temperance and the Rochester German Benevolent Society—were never used by those associations. The third, in Section O, by Temple (or Congregation) B'rith Kodesh became the oldest of the present four B'rith Kodesh plots.

Then, in 1849, the United Sons of Rochester, a "Colored Association," bought a block of five lots in Section O. This one was used and is extant today, although we have been unable to find any trace of the history of its owner.

Other early purchases include the first of three by the Masons, Lot 28 in Section M, 1851. Here is one of Mt. Hope's most interesting burials, Francis Salezy Wolowski, whose inscription says that he was "... Judge of the Supreme Court of the 1st Instance of the Kingdom of Poland."
The Odd Fellows came much later, in 1911 and 1918, and the Free Sons of Israel in between, in 1873.

The cemetery's record is less than complete with respect to many of these institutional holdings. For a variety of reasons (imperfectly understood today), some of the older lot drawings show no, or too few, burials even though the interment index indicates that they are there. And this, of course, leaves exact locations in doubt.

Some of the deficiencies could be at least partially remedied by a great deal of arduous research. An outstanding example of what can be accomplished is the 1993 work of Robert J. Young and his wife, Donna, of Washington, Pa., in producing a lot drawing of the 1848 B'rith Kodesh Plot. They became interested when Mr. Young discovered that his great, great grandfather is buried there, and they came to Rochester for several days. Using the cemetery's microfilm, they reviewed all the early books of the interment index and did a field survey of Lots 396 and 397, Section O, for markers and legible inscriptions. Then, using both sets of data, the Youngs reconstructed the plot as completely as it will ever be possible to do, and donated their work to the records at Mt. Hope.

It is unlikely that many others will want to tackle a project of that magnitude, but there are other less ambitious investigations available, and the Friends would be happy to hear from anyone, member or not, who is interested in becoming a research volunteer.

(More articles on other Institutional Plots will appear intermittently in later newsletters.)

**SOMETHING NEW**

To the south of the Susan B. Anthony gravesite are stone stairs leading to the lower level. Over the years some of the stones had become tilted, making them difficult to use. These stairs have been realigned and an iron railing installed. The work was made possible by the efforts of the Garden Gate Garden Club of The Seventh District of the Federated Garden Clubs and a grant from them. Jinny Noth was the project coordinator. The Friends appreciate their interest, and visitors to that section of the cemetery will find the grounds more accessible.

A planting plan for the entire Anthony plot was also devised. Both the railing and the planting plan were approved by the Preservation Board. Jinny Noth and a group of women from the Garden Gate Garden Club have adopted the Susan B. Anthony plot. They are also taking care of the Albert Hotchkiss, J. Foster Warner, and Col. Nathan Pond plots as part of our Adopt-a-Plot program.

**WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH**

March has been designated as Women’s History Month. As part of the celebration, the Friends are hosting a tea and slide talk on “Notable Women” who are buried in Mt. Hope. It will be held on Wednesday, March 29, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Old North Gatehouse. The event is open to the public.
Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery was held on Sunday, December 3. Jean Czerkas gave an interesting slide talk on the history of Warner Castle. Officers and members of the Board of Trustees were elected. Officers for 1995 are: Shirley R. Stephens, President; Dennis Carr, First Vice President; Edward J. Olinger, Second Vice President; Leon Creek, Treasurer; and Susanna Creek, Secretary.


Shirley Stephens, President, presented Certificates of Appreciation to Frank Gillespie, Jack McKinney, and Richard O. Reisem for their volunteer activities with the Friends.

NEW MEMBERS


Tours

The regular tour season begins on Sunday, May 7, 1995, at 2 and 3 o'clock. To arrange special tours, please call 461-3494 and leave a message. Someone will contact you.

THE FRIENDS OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY

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FRIENDS OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY

791 Mt. Hope Avenue

Rochester, New York 14620-2752

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